

WASHINGTON. D.C. – House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) joined other House Republicans today at a press conference today to urge President Barack Obama to abandon his plan to politicize the census process.

“Commanding the Census Director to report directly to the White House is a naked political power grab and transparently partisan,” Issa said. “There is only one possible reason for it – political interference in the 2010 Census and partisan manipulation of the results. The need for an independent Census Bureau is recognized by Republicans and Democrats alike – and every living former Census Director is on record supporting an independent Census Bureau. In short, this power grab completely jeopardizes and undermines the President’s mandate of ‘post-partisanship.’ The only thing that threatens this effort is the injection of Chicago-style politics into the Census process.”

Three House Committees (Oversight and Government Reform, Judiciary and House Administration) all share jurisdiction over census/redistricting/reapportionment issues. Republicans leaders also announced TODAY the formation of a Census Task Force that will be chaired by Congressman Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA) to examine all issues of the 2010 Census.

“The Congress has a duty to assure a fair count of every person in this country. I aim to coordinate the committees of oversight so that the census adheres to the law, not political interests,” Westmoreland said. “Leader Boehner and Ranking Member Issa took proactive steps on this issue even before the White House’s power grab to politicize the census by putting Rahm Emanuel in charge of it; their foresight and leadership have already paid off and I plan to keep the trust they’ve placed in me by making sure the federal government counts every person. With Rahm Emanuel heading up the census process, we need to make sure this constitutional process doesn’t become the DCCC – the Democratic Congressional Census Committee.”

Members of the Census Task Force:

- Lynn Westmoreland, Chairman
- Darrell Issa, Ranking Member of Oversight and Government Reform
- Lamar Smith, Ranking Member of Judiciary
- Dan Lungren, Ranking Member of Administration
- Patrick McHenry, Subcommittee Ranking Member of Information Policy, Census and National Archives, Oversight and Government Reform Designee
- Rep. Gregg Harper, House Administration Committee’s Designee
- Rep. James Sensenbrenner, House Judiciary Committee’s Designee

Last year, seven former Directors of the U.S. Census Bureau, appointed by Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, G.H.W. Bush, Clinton, and G.W. Bush, wrote, “...it is vitally important that the American public have confidence that the census results have been produced by an independent, non-partisan, apolitical, and scientific Census Bureau.”

House Republicans Call on White House to Abandon Census Power Grab

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